ONTARIO PARKS

Caliper Lake

Preliminary Management Plan

Ontario

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Cover photo: Camping at Caliper Lake

Cover photo taken by: Barry Wojciechowski

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Caliper Lake Provincial Park
P.O. Box 5080, 808 Robertson Street
Kenora, ON
P9N 3X9

Telephone: (807) 468-2669

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Examination and Adjustment of Management Direction

The following table serves as a record of adjustments and examinations of management direction.

Approval Date	**Examination or Type of Adjustment**	**Examination Outcome** *(where applicable)*	**List of Supporting Documents** *(do not hyperlink)*
	☐ Examination ☐ Administrative update ☐ Amendment ☐ Secondary Plan	☐ Status quo ☐ Administrative Update ☐ Amendment ☐ Replacement	*e.g., amendment form, update form, secondary plan, examination confirmation statement*

Opportunity to Comment

Caliper Lake Provincial Park Preliminary Management Plan

Ontario Parks, Northwest Zone is preparing a park management plan for Caliper Lake Provincial Park as part of a multi-staged planning process.

After careful consideration of related planning information, this document outlines Ontario Parks' draft site specific management policies for the provincial park.

For ease of review this preliminary park management plan is worded in the style of an approved park management plan. Note however that this document contains proposed site objectives, policies and actions related to managing the protected area's natural, cultural and recreational values. The approved park management plan will guide the management of the provincial park over the next 20 years.

You are invited to review and comment on the preliminary management plan for a period of 45 days following the release of this document. An open house in the community of Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls is being planned for April 30, 2015. Members of the planning team will be available to discuss the planning process and preliminary management direction.

To make your submission effective, list the topic/s you wish to discuss and briefly state your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the proposed management direction. You may also make suggestions or comments on other topics important to you. Respondents wanting their commercial business information to remain private should mark those parts of their submissions 'confidential'.

When preparing final plans, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry will consider all submissions on this preliminary management plan.

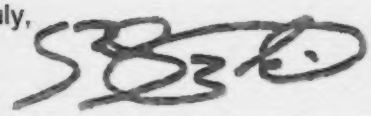
All comments regarding the preliminary park management plan should be made by June 1, 2015 and submitted to:

Matthew Yeo
Park Superintendent
Caliper Lake Provincial Park
P.O. Box 5080, 808 Robertson Street
Kenora ON P9N 3X9

Tel: (807) 468-2669
Fax: (807) 468-2737
Email: matthew.yeo@ontario.ca

Thank you in advance for your interest and comments on the future management of this provincial park.

Truly,



Bradley Fauteux, Managing Director

February 3, 2015
Date

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) is collecting your personal information and comments under the authority of Ontario's *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006*. Any personal information you provide (address, name, telephone, etc.) will be protected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, however your comments will become part of the record of consultation and may be shared with the general public. Your personal information may be used by the OMNRF to send you information about future OMNRF planning initiatives in the park area. If you have questions about the use of your personal information, please contact Julie Sullivan, at (807) 475-1282.

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1 CONTEXT

1.1 Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act

The *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006* (PPCRA) is the legislation that guides the planning and management of the protected areas system. The PPCRA has two specific principles that guide all aspects of planning and management of Ontario's system of provincial parks and conservation reserves:

- Maintenance of ecological integrity shall be the first priority and the restoration of ecological integrity shall be considered
- Opportunities for consultation shall be provided (2006, c. 12, s. 3).

1.2 Aboriginal Communities

Caliper Lake Provincial Park lies within the Treaty 3 Area. Treaty 3 includes a large area that extends from Lake Winnipeg (Manitoba) in the west to Dog Lake in the east and includes Lake of the Woods, Red Lake and Lac Seul. Treaty 3 is comprised of 28 First Nations in northwestern Ontario and southeastern Manitoba.

There are several nearby Aboriginal communities including Ojibways of Onegaming (Sabaskong), Anishinaabeg of Naongashiing (Big Island), Big Grassy River, Naotkamegwanning (Whitefish Bay), Anishinabe of Wauzhushk Onigum (Rat Portage), Northwest Angle #37, Northwest Angle #33, Shoal Lake #40, Iskatewizaagegan # 39 Independent First Nation, Ochiichagwe'babigo'ining (Dalles), Rainy River, Couchiching, Naicatchewenin, Obashkaandagaang (Washagamis Bay), Mitaanjigamiing (formerly Stanjikoming), Grassy Narrows, Wabauskang, Wabaseemoong, Eagle Lake and Wabigoon Lake (Figure 1).

In addition, the Kenora, Northwest and Sunset Country Métis Councils are located within this geographic area.

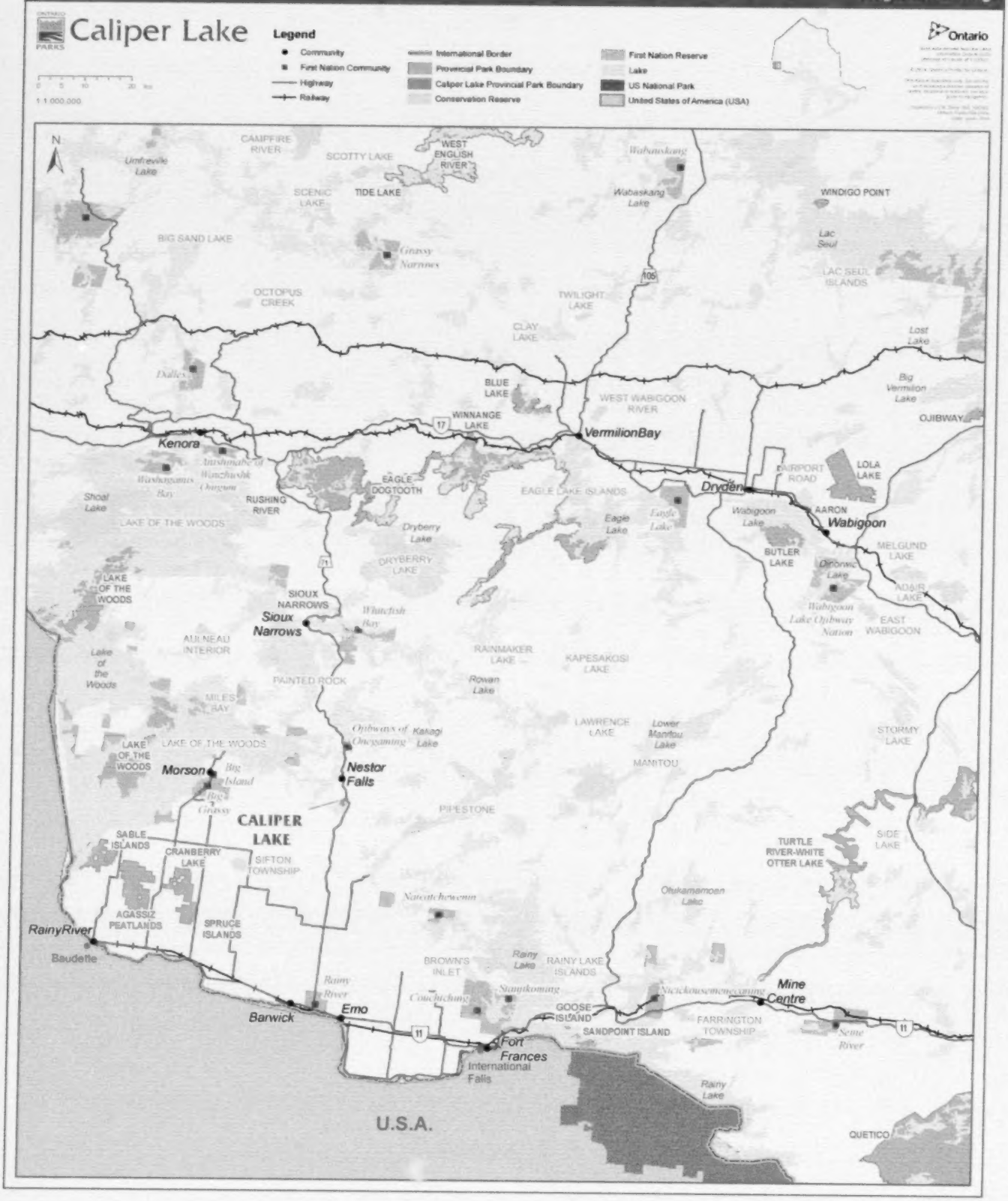
Aboriginal interests and use within Caliper Lake Provincial Park are not completely known.

1.3 Planning Context

This preliminary park management plan has been prepared consistent with direction contained in *Our Sustainable Future: A Renewed Call to Action, Ministry of Natural Resources Strategic Directions* (OMNR 2011a) and *Biodiversity: It's In Our Nature* (2012-2020), the Ontario Government's plan to conserve biodiversity.

The Caliper Lake Preliminary Park Management Plan has been developed in accordance with the PPCRA, Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (OMNR 1992) and Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999)).

All activities undertaken in Caliper Lake Provincial Park must comply with *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves* (Class EA-PPCR), where applicable (OMNR 2005).


Caliper Lake
Legend
Community
First Nation Community
Highway
Railway
International Border
Provincial Park Boundary
Caliper Lake Provincial Park Boundary
Conservation Reserve
First Nation Reserve
Lake
US National Park
United States of America (USA)
1:1,000,000
Ontario
N
CAMPFIRE RIVER
SCOTTY LAKE
WEST ENGLISH RIVER
TIDE LAKE
SCENIC LAKE
Umfreville Lake
Wabaskang
Wabaskang Lake
WINDIGO POINT
Lac Seul
LAC SEUL ISLANDS
BIG SAND LAKE
Grassy Narrows
OCTOPUS CREEK
TWILIGHT LAKE
CLAY LAKE
105
Lost Lake
Dalles
BLUE LAKE
WEST WABIGOON RIVER
Big Vermilion Lake
OJIBWAY
17
WINNANGE LAKE
Kenora
VermilionBay
Anishinaabe of Wauzhushk Onigum
Washagamis Bay
EAGLE DOGTOOTH
EAGLE LAKE ISLANDS
AIRPORT ROAD
LOLA LAKE
Dryden
Shoal Lake
RUSHING RIVER
Dryberry Lake
Eagle Lake
Eagle Lake
Wabigoon Lake
AARON
Wabigoon
LAKE OF THE WOODS
DRYBERRY LAKE
BUTLER LAKE
MELGUND LAKE
71
Obonga Lake
ADAIR LAKE
LAKE OF THE WOODS
SIOUX NARROWS
Sioux Narrows
Whitefish Bay
Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation
EAST WABIGOON
AULNEAU INTERIOR
RAINMAKER LAKE
KAPESAKOSI LAKE
Lake of the Woods
PAINTED ROCK
Rowan Lake
MILES BAY
Ojibways of Onegaming
Kakagi Lake
LAWRENCE LAKE
Lower Manitou Lake
STORMY LAKE
LAKE OF THE WOODS
LAKE OF THE WOODS
Morson
Big Island
Nestor Falls
MANITOU
Big Grassy
CALIPER LAKE
PIPESTONE
SABLE ISLANDS
CRANBERRY LAKE
SIFTON TOWNSHIP
TURTLE RIVER-WHITE OTTER LAKE
SIDE LAKE
Natootchewenin
Otukamamoon Lake
AGASSIZ PEATLANDS
SPRUCE ISLANDS
RainyRiver
Baudette
BROWNS INLET
Rainy Lake
RAINY LAKE ISLANDS
Rainy River
Couchiching
Stanjikoming
Nicickousemenecaning
Mine Centre
Emo
Barwick
GOOSE ISLAND
SANDPOINT ISLAND
FARRINGTON TOWNSHIP
11
Fort Frances
International Falls
Seine River
Rainy Lake
U.S.A.
QUETICO

1.4 Involvement

1.4.1 Summary and Results of Aboriginal Involvement

Twenty nearby Aboriginal communities were contacted about Phase 1 (invitation to participate and background information) in September 2007 and again in August 2009. Two communities requested planning materials. These materials were provided.

During Phase 1, one community requested an opportunity for involvement, but no formal meetings have occurred. The park superintendent made a presentation in September 2009 to elders of another community upon request.

1.4.2 Summary and Results of Public Involvement

Public involvement is an important part of the Caliper Lake park management planning process. The following provides a summary of the opportunities made available for the public to become involved in the planning process and a summary of the results.

- **Phase 1 - Invitation to participate; review the terms of reference and background information file**

The approved terms of reference document and the background information file were made available for the public to review on September 6th, 2007 and again on January 9th, 2008 through direct notices and EBR environmental registry (ER) postings. Of the four comments received, no comments or suggestions were concerning the content of the plan. Several requests to be added to the project mailing list were also received.

- **Phase 2 - Preliminary Park Management Plan (current phase)**

The public and Aboriginal communities will have an opportunity to review the preliminary management plan for a minimum period of 45 days through a notice on the ER after its formal release. This will allow interested participants to comment on proposals in the plan.

- **Phase 3 – Final Park Management Plan**

Using the input received on the preliminary plan, a final management plan will be prepared and made available to the public.

1.5 Summary of Significant Management Topics

No significant management concerns have been raised to date.

2 Contexte

2.1 Loi de 2006 sur les parcs provinciaux et les réserves de conservation

La *Loi de 2006 sur les parcs provinciaux et les réserves de conservation* guide la planification et la gestion du réseau des zones protégées. Deux des principes de cette loi régissent tous les aspects de la planification et de la gestion du réseau des parcs provinciaux et des réserves de conservation de l'Ontario:

- Le maintien de l'intégrité écologique est la priorité principale et le rétablissement de l'intégrité écologique est pris en considération.
- Des possibilités de consultation sont offertes. (2006, chap. 12, art. 3.)

2.2 Prise en compte de la Déclaration sur les valeurs environnementales du ministère des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts produite conformément à la Charte des droits environnementaux

La *Déclaration sur les valeurs environnementales* du ministère des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts produite conformément à la *Charte des droits environnementaux* décrit comment tenir compte des objectifs de la Charte dans les décisions du ministère qui pourraient avoir des répercussions importantes sur l'environnement. Ces décisions incluent celles prises dans le cadre de la préparation des orientations de la gestion d'une zone protégée.

La Déclaration du ministère a été prise en compte tout au long du processus de planification. Les orientations de la gestion du parc provincial Caliper Lake serviront les objectifs de la gestion des ressources de l'Ontario dans la perspective de la durabilité environnementale.

2.3 Contexte de la planification

Ce plan préliminaire de gestion du parc a été préparé conformément aux orientations énoncées dans *Notre avenir durable : un appel à l'action renouvelé*, ministère des Richesses naturelles (2011) et *La biodiversité, c'est dans notre nature – Plan du gouvernement de l'Ontario pour conserver la biodiversité, 2012-2020* (2012).

Le plan préliminaire de gestion du parc Caliper Lake a été préparé conformément, entre autres, aux dispositions de la *Loi de 2006 sur les parcs provinciaux et les réserves de conservation*.

Toutes les activités entreprises dans le parc provincial Caliper Lake doivent être conformes à l'Évaluation environnementale de portée générale relative aux parcs provinciaux et aux réserves de conservation (EE-PPRC), le cas échéant (2005).

La vision du ministère est le « développement durable » et sa mission est d'assurer la « durabilité écologique ». Le programme de Parcs Ontario vise principalement à offrir

un « environnement naturel sain aux Ontariennes et aux Ontariens », mais apporte aussi une contribution à d'autres éléments stratégiques. Le mandat du ministère concernant Parcs Ontario est d'assurer la prestation du programme des parcs **et réserves de conservation** de l'Ontario, dont la protection et la gestion des milieux naturels, culturels et récréatifs d'importance à l'échelle provinciale, les activités des parcs provinciaux, la création de créneaux touristiques et l'éducation sur le patrimoine naturel, la planification et la gestion des parcs et zones protégées, le leadership stratégique pour les réserves de conservation ainsi que le suivi, la vérification et l'établissement de rapports publics sur les parcs et zones protégées de l'Ontario.

Ce document a aussi été préparé conformément aux orientations exposées dans *Protéger la biodiversité pour assurer l'avenir : Stratégie de la biodiversité de l'Ontario* (2005) et dans le *Manuel de planification des zones protégées* (2009). Parcs Ontario appuie autant le premier objectif « protéger la diversité du capital génétique, des espèces et des écosystèmes en Ontario » que le deuxième « utiliser et développer de manière durable les ressources biologiques de l'Ontario, et faire en sorte que la population ontarienne puisse jouir des avantages que cela crée ». En particulier, le parc provincial Caliper Lake sera géré de manière à protéger les espèces à risque et leurs habitats conformément à la *Loi de 2007 sur les espèces en voie de disparition* et ses règlements.

2.4 Peuples autochtones

Les Premières Nations des Ojibways d'Onegaming (Sabaskong), Anishinaabeg de Naongashiing (Big Island), Big Grassy River, Naotkamegwanning (Whitefish Bay), Anishinabe de Wauzhushk Onigum (Rat Portage), Northwest Angle n° 37, Northwest Angle #33, Shoal Lake n° 40, Iskatewizaagegan n° 39 Independent First Nation, Ochiichagwe'babigo'ining (Dalles), Rainy River, Couchiching, Naicatchewenin, Obashkaandagaang (Washagamis Bay), Stanjikoming, Grassy Narrows, Wabauskang, Wabaseemoong, Eagle Lake, et de Wabigoon Lake se trouvent dans les environs du parc. Le parc provincial Caliper Lake fait partie de la zone d'utilisation traditionnelle de ces communautés autochtones et, pour le moment, ne fait l'objet d'aucune revendication territoriale. De plus, les bureaux de Kenora et de Sunset Country de la Nation des Métis de l'Ontario se trouvent aussi dans les environs du parc.

Le parc provincial Caliper Lake chevauche des terres et eaux traditionnelles de ces communautés autochtones qui y chassent, posent des pièges, pêchent, se regroupent et voyagent.

Conscient des caractéristiques archéologiques autochtones situées dans la région, Parcs Ontario apportera une attention spéciale aux intérêts particuliers des Premières Nations locales. Le respect et la protection des caractéristiques archéologiques et culturelles font partie intégrante de ce plan de gestion du parc. Les Premières Nations seront consultées sur des points qui les concernent pendant la mise en œuvre de ce plan.

2.5 INTRODUCTION

Le parc provincial Caliper Lake, de 147 ha, est classé dans la catégorie « parc de loisirs ». Il a été réglementé en 1960 sous le nom « Caliper Lake Provincial Camp and Picnic Grounds ». On accède au parc, situé sur la rive du lac Caliper, par la route 71.

En 1997, le MRN a annoncé un programme complet de planification de l'aménagement du territoire, *Des terres pour la vie*, dont un des objectifs était de compléter le réseau des parcs et zones protégées de l'Ontario dans la région visée par la planification. C'est ainsi que beaucoup de nouvelles zones protégées recommandées ont été proposées et examinées dans le cadre d'un programme de consultation publique mené dans tout l'Ontario. Le fruit du programme *Des terres pour la vie* a été la *Stratégie d'aménagement du Patrimoine vital de l'Ontario* publiée en juillet 1999.

La Stratégie d'aménagement a aussi entraîné des modifications aux politiques régissant l'utilisation des ressources et les usages récréatifs ainsi que l'établissement d'installations, car ces politiques s'appliqueront aux nouveaux parcs et aux ajouts aux parcs recommandés dans la stratégie. Ces modifications sont prises en compte dans ce plan préliminaire[1].

Le parc provincial Caliper Lake apporte une contribution importante au réseau des parcs provinciaux. Le parc est depuis longtemps reconnu comme étant une destination importante de loisir et une zone naturelle dotée d'attributs biophysiques, récréatifs et culturels uniques.

Le parc est situé dans un paysage au sous-sol rocheux typique du bouclier précambrien, et sa végétation est caractéristique de la zone de transition entre la région des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent et la forêt boréale. Les espèces de la forêt boréale, comme l'épinette blanche, l'épinette noire, le sapin baumier, le pin gris, le tremble et le bouleau blanc s'intercalent dans les pins rouges et les pins blancs et d'autres espèces plus typiques de la forêt des Grands Lacs et du Saint-Laurent.
La planification récente du parc provincial Caliper Lake a débuté conjointement avec la planification du parc provincial Sioux Narrows en 2006, avec l'approbation du cadre de référence et des renseignements généraux en septembre 2007 (*Caliper Lake and Sioux Narrows Provincial Parks Terms of Reference* and *Background Information File*). Le processus de planification du parc était lié à celui du parc provincial Sioux Narrows parce que les deux parcs étaient similaires dans leurs buts, objectifs et politiques d'aménagement. Ces deux documents ont été relancés une deuxième fois en janvier 2008 pour inclure des utilisateurs de ressources qui avaient été négligés durant le premier lancement. Une séance d'information publique fera partie du lancement du plan d'aménagement préliminaire (*Caliper Lake Provincial Park Preliminary Management Plan*). Le plan de gestion préliminaire du parc (*Caliper Lake Provincial Park Preliminary Management Plan*) sera aussi distribué à une liste d'envoi élargie.

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[1] Le plan de gestion préliminaire du parc Caliper Lake a été élaboré conformément aux politiques de planification et de gestion des parcs provinciaux de l'Ontario (1992) et de la *Stratégie d'aménagement du Patrimoine vital de l'Ontario* (1999). Conformément à ce plan, le MRNF modifiera les politiques d'aménagement du territoire particulières à la région concernée ainsi que les cartes figurant dans l'Atlas et politiques de l'aménagement des terres de la Couronne à http://crownlandusecatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca.

Les autres parcs provinciaux et réserves de conservation du voisinage comprennent les parcs de Caliper Lake, Rushing River, Eagle-Dogtooth, Winnange Lake, Lac-des-Bois, et Blue Lake ainsi que les réserves de conservation de Painted Rock, Lac-des-Bois, Aulneau Interior, Dryberry Lake et Miles Bay, entre autres.

Le parc provincial Caliper Lake est situé entre la ville de Fort Frances et le hameau de Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls sur la route 71. La région abrite aussi les villages de Rainy River et Vermillion Bay ainsi que les villes de Kenora, Dryden, et Thunder Bay.

Le plan approuvé de gestion guidera la gestion, l'exploitation et l'aménagement du parc provincial Caliper Lake au cours des vingt prochaines années. Il pourra être révisé ou modifié au besoin en suivant le processus décrit dans la section 12.

2.6 RÉSUMÉ DES POINTS IMPORTANTS (sans ordre particulier)

Plusieurs points importants sont ressortis dès les premières étapes de la planification du parc.

2.7 Politiques d'aménagement

Les utilisations permises dans ce plan sont conformes aux politiques de planification et de gestion des parcs provinciaux de l'Ontario modifiées par la *Stratégie d'aménagement du Patrimoine vital de l'Ontario*. Les restrictions suivantes ont été ajoutées au plan préliminaire :

- La recherche scientifique est permise
- Les aménagements industriels tels que la coupe de bois ou l'exploitation minière sont interdits
- La chasse n'est pas permise
- Les motoneiges et les véhicules tout terrain ne sont pas permis dans le parc
- La nage et la baignade sont permises dans les aires de baignade désignées
- La navigation de plaisance est permise sauf dans les aires de baignade désignées
- Le camping sauvage n'est pas permis
- Il n'y a pas de sites archéologiques ou culturels connus dans le parc

2.8 Zones d'aménagements

Il y aura quatre zones officielles dans le parc (section 10); une zone de développement (D1), une zone d'accès (A1), une zone de réserve naturelle et une zone d'environnement naturel (NE1).

Les utilisations permises dans chacune des zones sont conformes aux politiques de gestion des parcs provinciaux de l'Ontario modifiées par la *Stratégie d'aménagement du Patrimoine vital de l'Ontario.*

2.9 Priorités de mise en œuvre

Les prochains points seront mis en priorité durant la mise en œuvre du plan de gestion du parc une fois qu'il aura été approuvé :

- Examen annuel du plan d'exploitation du parc
- Il faut veiller à ce que le sentier de randonnée voie reconnue sa valeur dans la planification de l'aménagement forestier, et que son utilisation soit surveillée
- Remplacement du bureau du parc et réalignement des chemins selon les besoins, tout en aménageant des installations de stationnement connexes appropriées
- Entretien et restauration de la végétation dans les zones très perturbées du parc pour préserver ou atteindre les processus et objectifs écologiques
- Remplacement ou amélioration de l'aménagement de faible portée selon les besoins pour maintenir les installations de fréquentation diurne, notamment en actualisant les panneaux sur les sentiers et les guides interprétatifs
- Enlèvement du bâtiment des douches désaffecté de l'aire de fréquentation diurne
- Atténuer les dommages à la végétation dans les campings et réduire les pressions afin de minimiser les dommages, et réaliser d'autres améliorations dans les campings suivant les besoins
- Préparation d'un plan éducatif du patrimoine naturel

3 INTRODUCTION

Caliper Lake Provincial Park is a 147 ha recreational class park. It was regulated in 1960 as Caliper Lake Provincial Camp and Picnic Grounds. The park is situated on Caliper Lake within the Geographic Township of Claxton and in the Territorial District of Rainy River, and is located approximately 140 kilometres southeast of the City of Kenora and 90 kilometres northwest of the Town of Fort Frances and International Falls, MN, U.S.A. (Figure 1). The park is accessed from Highway 71.

Caliper Lake Provincial Park is best known for its scenic campground and day-use area nestled within a mature red and white pine forest.

Caliper Lake receives moderate use in the summer months and supports a wide range of recreational activities including: camping, swimming, sport fishing, hiking, bicycling, picnicking and boating. The park draws visitors from regional, national and international markets. The majority of visitors to the park are from northwestern Ontario, Manitoba and the United States of America (U.S.A.) (Ontario Parks 2007).

The approved park management plan will guide the management, operation and development of Caliper Lake for at least the next 20 years (Ontario Parks 2014).

4 PARK CLASSIFICATION

Caliper Lake is a recreational class park. As described in the PPCRA, recreational class parks provide a wide variety of compatible outdoor recreation opportunities in attractive natural surroundings.

The majority of the developed area in the park, including the campground area, is situated on the shores of Caliper Lake. The park provides opportunities for a wide variety of recreational activities.

5 PURPOSE

Caliper Lake Provincial Park was originally established as a wayside rest area along Highway 71. Today it contributes to the protection of critical landform-vegetation units and contains a mature stand of red and white pines somewhat unique in size, age, and uniformity, occurring in the transition between the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence forest and the boreal forest.

The overall purpose of the park is to protect the natural features of Caliper Lake Provincial Park, while providing heritage appreciation, education and a variety of ecologically sustainable opportunities for recreation.

5 VISION

The long-term vision for Caliper Lake Provincial Park is to continue to provide quality recreational opportunities to the public, while ensuring natural characteristics of the park's ecology are maintained.

The park has a long history of providing recreational opportunities, and shall continue to do so through its operating partnership. While providing these opportunities, the ecological integrity of the park must also be addressed, considered, and given priority where possible.

6 OBJECTIVES

As stated in the PPCRA, Ontario's provincial parks system has four objectives for establishing and managing provincial parks:

- Permanently protect representative ecosystems, biodiversity and provincially significant elements of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and to manage these areas to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained;

- Provide opportunities for ecologically sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities and encourage associated economic benefits;

- Provide opportunities for residents of Ontario and visitors to increase their knowledge and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage; and

- Facilitate scientific research and to provide points of reference to support monitoring of ecological change on the broader landscape.

6.1 Protection Objective

Ontario's protected areas play an important role in representing and conserving the diversity of Ontario's natural features and ecosystems across the broader landscape. Protected areas include representative examples of life and earth science features, and cultural heritage features within ecologically or geologically defined regions. Ontario's ecological land classification system provides the basis for the life science feature assessment, and the geological themes provide the basis for earth science assessment.

The park's protection objectives are:

To permanently protect the ecosystems of Caliper Lake Provincial Park, including glacial features which support vegetation, by allowing them to function as freely as possible considering the size and setting of the park.

To ensure that conditions persist which can effectively support continued ecologically sustainable recreation, use and interpretation of features at Caliper Lake.

To manage, operate and develop the park to ensure that ecological integrity is considered and maintained, and restored (where appropriate).

6.1.1 Life Sciences

Located within Ecoregion 4S (Lake Wabigoon) and Ecodistrict 4S-6 (Kenora), Caliper Lake Provincial Park is situated on terrain typical of the Precambrian Shield in northwestern Ontario. In addition, limy clay deposits originating from glacial Lake Agassiz can be found in depressions on the landscape. This ecodistrict contains the middle Winnipeg River watershed, excluding the lower Rainy River watershed (Crins et al. 2005).

Vegetation is best described as representative of the north-south transitional zone between the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence and the boreal forests (Noble 1977).

6.1.1.1 Representation Analysis

A complete representation analysis (Crins and Kor 2000) using landform-vegetation (L/V) information was conducted for Caliper Lake Provincial Park. Despite the park's small size, Caliper Lake Provincial Park makes a significant contribution to the minimum representation guidelines for the Kenora Ecodistrict. The park contains nine different L/V associations, four of which are critical in meeting the representation targets for the

Kenora Ecodistrict. Critical L/V associations include: open marsh/fen/bog, thicket swamp, aspen dominated, and Jack pine mixedwoods all on fine lacustrine and glaciolacustrine soil. Caliper Lake Provincial Park contributes the only representation of Jack pine mixedwoods and a high component of thicket swamp on fine lacustrine and glaciolacustrine soils in protected areas in the Kenora Ecodistrict.

6.1.1.2 Vegetation Communities

Caliper Lake Provincial Park is located within a transition zone where Great Lakes-St. Lawrence forest and boreal forest both exist (Rowe 1972). In general, six major forest communities represent the vegetation cover in Caliper Lake Provincial Park. They can be generally described as: red pine - white pine uplands, pure Jack pine, Jack pine mixed woods, ash-alder-willow wetlands, marsh wetlands, and aspen dominated mixed woods (Goddard 1983; OMNR 2005).

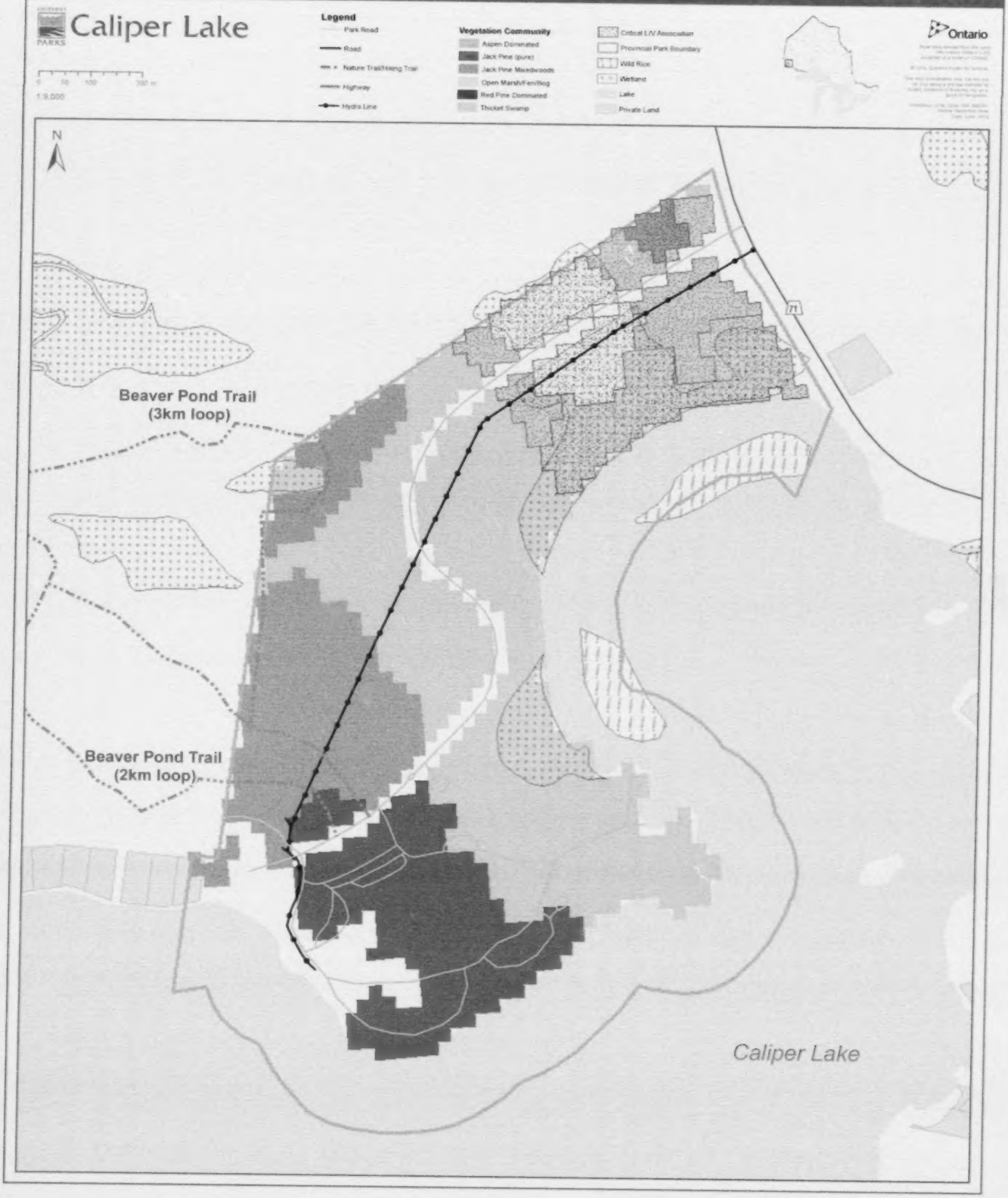
Although mature red and white pine stands are representative of the region, the stands in Caliper Lake are unique due to their large size, age and uniformity (Goddard 1983). Upper canopy trees within the stands reach heights of 30 – 40 metres with an average diameter at breast height measurement of fifty centimetres (Goddard 1983). Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) data indicates the pine stand originated around 1840. Much of this community is included in the development zone; however a substantial proportion has been included in the nature reserve zones, where it will receive the maximum level of protection. Over the years, the white pine trees have been affected by minor infestations of white pine blister rust and lightning strikes. With aggressive fire suppression action, the fire cycle has increased dramatically in recent years, which has resulted in a shift in forest age class and species composition (e.g., higher presence of fire sensitive, shade-tolerant species such as balsam fir, and reduced red and white pine regeneration).

6.1.1.1 Fauna

Although a detailed inventory has not been completed for Caliper Lake Provincial Park, the fauna is typical of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence forest and also contains elements of the boreal forest. Species common to the park are white-tailed deer, wolf, lynx and various year-round and migratory birds (Goddard 1983). Bald eagle, a species designated as special concern and American white pelican, a species designated as threatened on the Species at Risk (SAR) in Ontario list are common in the area (OMNR 2013). Bald eagles and barred owls have been known to nest within the park boundaries (Goddard 1983) and white pelicans nest in large colonies on nearby Lake of the Woods (Harris and Foster 2004).

Figure 2

Vegetation Communities and Critical L/V Associations



6.1.2 Earth Sciences

Caliper Lake Provincial Park encompasses a moderately-broken terrain typical of the Precambrian Shield of northwestern Ontario and lies within the Wabigoon Subprovince of the Superior Province. Steeply sloping bedrock knolls and ridges outcrop along much of the shoreline and form basins in which swamps and bogs marked by thick clay deposits and organic build-up are common (Kor 1977). Several cliff faces of various heights not exceeding about five metres occur within the park.

Surficial deposits, remnants of the last glacial event about 11,700 years ago, consist predominantly of a very thin to patchy mantle of glacial sediment, namely medium-grained, dark to medium-brown, silty, clayey sand till (Kor 1977). Boulders of local origin are common, and various sized stones are strewn throughout the park. One erratic boulder, consisting of a felsic volcanic rock, occupies a prominent position on the nature trail (Kor 2009).

6.1.3 Cultural Heritage Resources

Caliper Lake Provincial Park is situated in an area rich in cultural history.

The Lake of the Woods area provided productive hunting grounds, wild rice fields and numerous transportation routes, which were the basis of survival for the Cree and Assiniboine (and later the Ojibway) people (Beaudry and Lavender-Sexsmith 1983). Relatively little is known about the cultural affiliations and distribution of Aboriginal people prior to European contact (Beaudry and Lavender-Sexsmith 1983). A testimony to the area's rich Aboriginal history is the existence of several First Nation communities located in the Lake of the Woods area (Figure 1).

The French began to explore the Rainy Lake-Lake of the Woods area during the 17th century in search of profitable furs, and both the French and English had established fur trade posts after 1700 (Beaudry and Lavender-Sexsmith 1983). The construction of Highway 71, linking Kenora and Fort Frances, was a public works effort during the Great Depression. Upon completion in 1936, tourism began to increase in the area. Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls continues to be a popular vacation destination.

No known cultural heritage or archaeological features exist within the park boundaries, however there are two registered archaeological sites located in close proximity to the park Lambert 1983). It is believed that "the lack of known historical values in the park may reflect its isolation from the mainstream of local fur trade routes" (Beaudry and Lavender-Sexmith 1983).

6.2 Recreation Objective

The park's recreation objective is:

To continue to provide high-quality day-use and overnight camping opportunities in a manner which considers and attempts to minimize the associated impacts of such activities on the park and surrounding ecosystem.

Caliper Lake Provincial Park provides numerous opportunities for a variety of compatible high quality recreational activities. The park includes facilities for car camping and day-use. The most popular activities include: resting/relaxing, swimming/wading, canoeing, hiking, fishing, and viewing/photographing nature (Ontario Parks 2000).

Although the park is officially closed in the winter, some activities do take place in the park by local residents such as: cross country skiing (on un-groomed trails), snowshoeing and walking.

6.3 Heritage Appreciation Objective

The park's heritage appreciation objective is:

To provide park visitors with opportunities to learn about the natural heritage features of Caliper Lake, such as glacial history, vegetation communities, including the pine forest, and the conditions and species these values support. Cultural heritage themes relevant to the park will be included, should resources be discovered.

Natural heritage education for Caliper Lake Provincial Park is conducted through self-use facilities, including; a self-guided nature trail and informal interpretive displays in the park office.

7 BOUNDARY

The boundary of Caliper Lake includes all lands and lake bed regulated (147.35 hectares) under the PPCRA as Caliper Lake Provincial Park (Figure 3).

The park is bordered by Crown land in the west, with the exception of one small private parcel of land on the Caliper Lake shoreline, and Caliper Lake in the east. Highway 71 abuts the northeast boundary. There is no private land within the park boundary; however private lands are accessed from the park road. The park boundary extends 152.4 metres (500 feet) into Caliper Lake to include that portion of the lake bed.

Within the regulated park boundary, the protection of park values and features will be achieved through appropriate zoning, the control of land use and activities, education, and monitoring of ecological impacts.

The PPCRA governs activities within provincial parks and applies only to lands and waters within regulated boundaries of parks and conservation reserves.

Additions to the park will be considered if the property is needed to enhance the values of the park. Potential acquisitions are subject to available resources and the willingness of the owners to sell or lease their properties.

8 ADJACENT LAND USES

Several parcels of private land are located on Caliper Lake, one of which is directly adjacent to the park. The park road is used to access private lands beyond the park boundary.

Caliper Lake Provincial Park is surrounded by an active trapline area (FF5), an active bear management area (BMA; FF-07B-097) and an active bait harvest area (FF0156). The regulated park is excluded from these areas. Crown lands adjacent to the park are within the Crossroute Forest Management Unit.

Part of the park hiking trail is located on Crown land outside of the park. For operational reasons and to protect and enhance the recreational interests that this trail provides, this area (approximately 33 hectares) may be added to the park through a future land use planning process, subject to consultation.

An Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs trail exists on Caliper Lake (Section 8.4.3).

9 PARK POLICIES

The following policies apply to the whole park.

9.1 Industrial and Commercial Uses

The following industrial activities are prohibited in Caliper Lake Provincial Park:

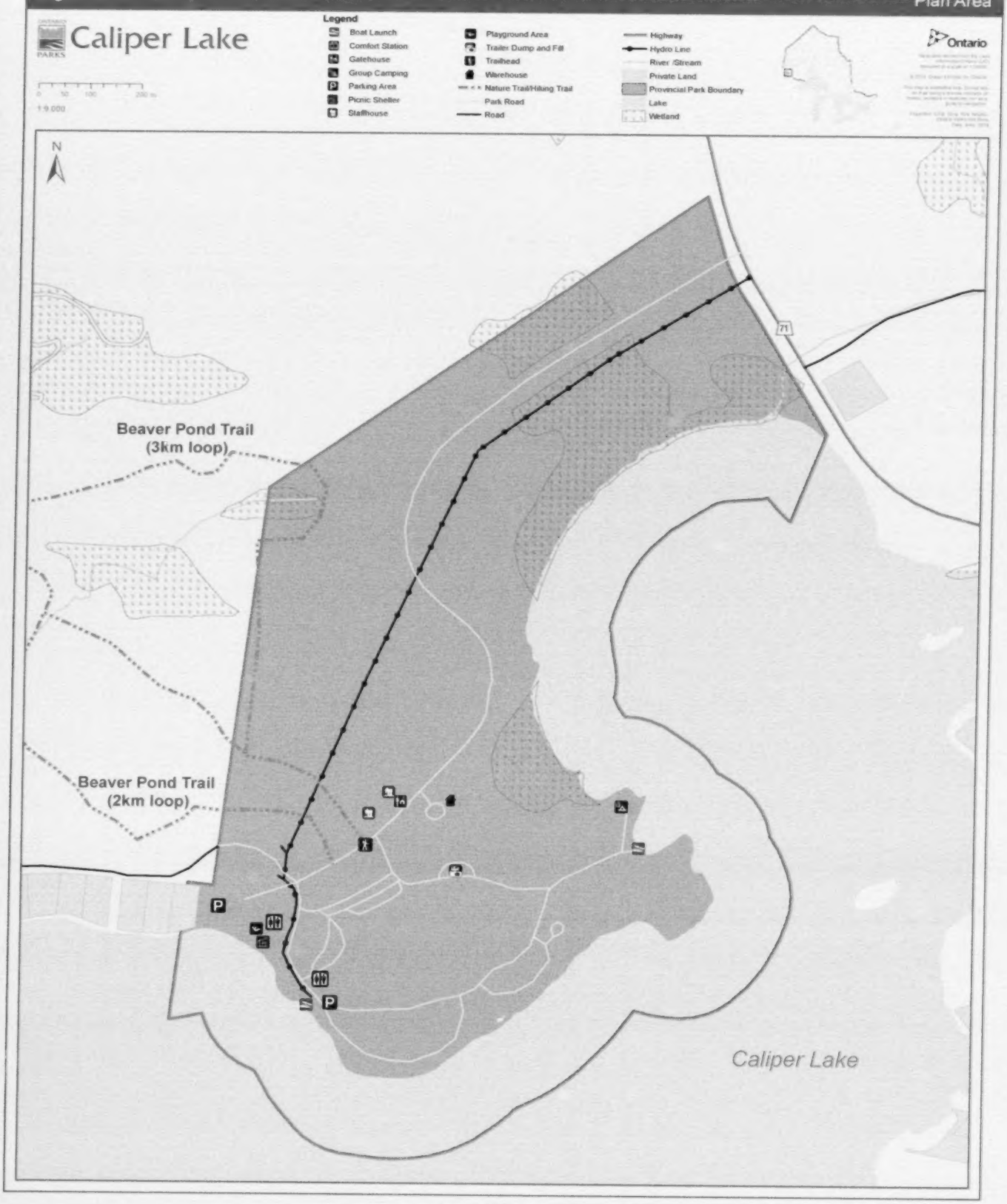
- commercial timber harvest;
- prospecting, staking of mining claims, developing mineral interests, working mines;
- extracting aggregate, topsoil or peat;
- generation of electricity;
- other industrial uses.
-

The following commercial activities are prohibited in Caliper Lake Provincial Park:

- trapping
- bait harvesting
- bear management area(s) (BMA).

Figure 3

Plan Area



9.2 Adaptive Management

An adaptive management approach will be applied to resource management activities within Caliper Lake Provincial Park. The main premise behind adaptive management is that ecosystems are complex and dynamic. Our understanding of ecosystems and our ability to predict how they will respond to our management actions and disturbances is often limited. These knowledge gaps lead to uncertainty over how best to manage parks to meet the obligation of maintaining ecological integrity.

Implementing an adaptive management approach allows researchers to design robust experiments, with careful consideration, to evaluate management options. This in turn provides park managers with directly relevant and scientifically defensible information to help them make management decisions (Kingston and Mosley 2007).

9.3 Resource Management Policies

Planning and management decisions are intended to ensure the maintenance of ecological integrity of protected areas. Consideration will also be given to social and economic components. Ontario Parks will ensure that these decisions are made with the best available information. Where this information is lacking, Ontario Parks may conduct research, inventories and monitoring, as necessary, to provide this information. Such efforts will be undertaken based on established methodologies and best practices and will foster an adaptive management approach.

The site specific policies that follow will guide the management of park resources consistent with the PPCRA, the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (ESA), and with the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act, 1990* (EAA). Resource management projects and activities will be undertaken consistent with the Class EA-PPCR, where applicable.

For greater certainty, nothing in this plan shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the protection provided for the existing aboriginal or treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada as recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (2007, c. 6, s. 46).

9.3.1 Land Management

Management of the Caliper Lake Provincial Park land base will be directed towards maintaining the park's natural landscape and protecting its ecological integrity.

A right-of-way for an electricity distribution line, under authority of a land use permit (LUP), extends through the park to provide power to the park and the adjacent cottages (Section 9.3.7).

Comfort station waste generated from campground use will be disposed of using Ministry of the Environment-approved septic systems.

No private recreation camps, boat caches or commercial tourism operations exist within Caliper Lake Provincial Park. No new private, non-commercial dispositions or outright sale of park land are permitted.

Commercial agreements (eg. LUP, leases, etc.) may be entered into or renewed.

9.3.2 Water Management

The health and integrity of ecological communities, existing within aquatic areas, will be given priority when assessing feasibility and potential negative effects of any new developments or activities.

Drinking and bathing beach water sampling and testing will be carried out in compliance with:

- the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* and associated regulations; and the
- Ontario Beach Monitoring Protocol.

9.3.3 Alien and Invasive Species

Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy defines alien species (also referred to as introduced, non-native or exotic species) as "plants, animals and micro-organisms that have been accidentally or deliberately introduced into areas beyond their normal range". Alien species will not be deliberately introduced into Caliper Lake Provincial Park (Ontario Biodiversity Council 2011).

There are several common alien species (e.g., white sweet clover, three-toothed cinquefoil, stinging nettle and oxeye daisy) established in the park, however none are known to currently threaten natural or cultural values. Section 9.3.12, identifies the monitoring efforts in place within the park.

Where possible, actions will be taken to eliminate or reduce the threat of invasive species which may be affecting naturally occurring populations. Where alien invasive species are already established and threaten natural or cultural values, a control program may be undertaken if feasible and practical.

9.3.4 Insects and Diseases

Native insects and disease are a natural and integral part of the ecology of Caliper Lake Provincial Park that will normally be allowed to fulfill their ecological role. In exceptional circumstances, control measures will be considered if values of the park are threatened. Insect and disease control measures for alien, and in some extreme cases native species, will be considered if the values, including the ecological integrity, of the park are threatened.

Forest insect and disease infestations may be monitored, assessed and treated in the campground for aesthetic and safety reasons. In extreme cases, treatment may take place to minimize effects of insects and disease on campground aesthetics.

White pine blister rust, an invasive disease, exists in both pine trees (primary host) and species of *Ribes* (currant), and can be transmitted between tree and shrub species. Removal of infected currant and/or gooseberry plants, by means of hand tending, may be considered if white pine blister rust persists and becomes problematic (Section 9.3.7). Pruning of white pine trees may also be considered to mitigate infestation.

Monitoring and research activities pertaining to insects and disease within the park are encouraged, based on available funding (see Section 9.3.11).

9.3.5 Forest Fire Management

According to the Natural Fire Regimes in Ontario (Van Sleeuwen 2006), Caliper Lake Provincial Park is located within the Boreal West Forest Region where fire is a major disturbance. The relatively short fire cycles of the boreal forest create a forest mosaic mainly composed of pure or mixed, even-aged stands at different stages of recovery (Van Sleeuwen 2006).

Red pine, white pine and conifer mixed wood forests located within the park are typically fire-maintained community types. Prior to settlement and fire protection, mixed red-white-jack pine forests within the park likely experienced a variable fire regime of low intensity fires at short intervals punctuated by stand replacing fires at longer intervals (Van Sleeuwen 2006).

The Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario (OMNR 2004) provides strategic direction for the management of forest fires across Ontario. Caliper Lake Provincial Park is in the Boreal Fire Management Zone. According to this provincial strategy, this zone has a high level of protection, with fires generally receiving aggressive initial attack and sustained action until extinguished.

9.3.5.1 Fire Response

The park's proximity to the Highway 71 corridor and the community of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls makes it impractical to allow forest fires to function freely, without putting values within and adjacent to the park, at risk. As a result, forest fires in the park will be suppressed and response options such as modified response or monitoring will not be used. "Light on the land" fire suppression techniques will be used whenever feasible. These minimal impact suppression techniques do not unduly disturb natural or cultural values.

The response for structural fires and forest fires is guided by an informal agreement between the MNRF and the Township of Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls. Fire evacuation procedures will be outlined in the Fire Emergency and Evacuation Plan for Caliper Lake Provincial Park.

Prescribed burning may be used to maintain naturally occurring vegetation communities in the park or to reduce fire hazards. Any prescribed burns will be planned and executed

in accordance with the Prescribed Burning Operations Policy (OMNR 2011b), with the cooperation of the Aviation, Forest Fires and Emergency Services Branch's (AFFES) Planning and Information Management Team and the Fort Frances Fire Management Headquarters.

9.3.5.2 Additional Fire Direction

Partial or total fire bans may be put in place and enforced at the discretion of the park superintendent following consultation with MNRF fire staff and the local municipal fire department.

Ontario FireSmart program principles will be considered where possible to protect park infrastructure. Steps will be taken to reduce or mitigate the threat posed by fire to infrastructure.

Fuel caches for purposes other than use by park staff during regular operation and maintenance activities are not permitted in the park.

9.3.6 Species at Risk (SAR)

Species found within the park are described in Section 6.1.1.3.

SAR and their habitats will be protected in a manner consistent with the ESA, 2007 and associated regulations.

9.3.7 Vegetation Management

The park's vegetation communities are described in Section 6.1.1.2.

Management of the park's vegetation will be directed towards maintaining and protecting the ecological integrity of the park and to support the evolving natural succession of plant communities.

Subject to the Class EA-PPCR, vegetation management, landscape management or restoration projects may be developed to address impacts of recreation and park use so that ecological integrity is maintained or restored within the park. While maintaining the park's ecological integrity remains a priority, restoration efforts shall be considered in highly compromised areas, including within the development zone. This may include trail rehabilitation, and the planting of vegetation in the development zone (e.g., campground) to ensure the succession of vegetation.

The removal of hazard trees will be permitted in all zones where safety is a concern (e.g., trails and campground). Underbrush may be cleared around park buildings using FireSmart (Section 9.3.5.3) techniques to mitigate potential fire damage and protect park infrastructure.

Areas experiencing adverse use impacts (e.g. root exposure, trampling, limb cutting and damage from vehicles) will be rehabilitated whenever possible. Should planting or seeding be necessary, species native to the park will be used. Seed sources of these species will originate from the park or a nearby location.

Although White pine blister rust is present, it is not considered to be a problem at this time. If the condition persists, pruning infected pine and removal of *Ribes* plants (the alternate host for the fungi) by means of hand tending should be examined (Section 9.3.4).

Herbicide applications, including in the hydro corridor, will be discouraged. Insect and disease control measures are found in Section 9.3.4.

Any development that requires the removal of vegetation other than hazard trees will be supported by a vegetation inventory in accordance with approved site plans.

9.3.8 Wildlife Management

Management of wildlife in Caliper Lake Provincial Park will be directed towards maintaining and protecting the park's ecological integrity. Proposed wildlife management projects and activities may be subject to the Class EA-PPCR.

The Cervid Ecological Framework (OMNR 2009) guides management of cervid species in the park and on the surrounding landscape. American elk and woodland caribou will be monitored and sightings documented, as the park is contained within the Cervid Ecological Zone 'C1' of this framework.

Displaced and nuisance animals (e.g., black bears) may be controlled when essential to human health and safety, the health of the species outside the park or the values for which the park has been established.

Where control is necessary, humane techniques having minimal effects on other components of the park's environment will be used.

9.3.9 Fisheries Management

Caliper Lake experiences heavy angling pressure from park users, cottagers and tourist camp patrons (OMNR 1987). Target species include: walleye, black crappie, smallmouth bass and northern pike.

Ontario has adopted a broad, landscape-level approach to fisheries management by creating Fisheries Management Zones (FMZs). These areas have "similar ecological, physical, social and economic attributes and are intended to delineate areas that are expected to react similarly to external changes, pressures and management actions" (OMNR 2012b). Lake of the Woods is included in FMZ 5. A fisheries management plan for FMZ 5 is in the final stages of development.

Priorities identified by the Fisheries Management Zone Advisory Council for FMZ 5 and the MNRF include; managing for the quality of the walleye fishery, the sustainability of lake trout populations, establishing management objectives for northern pike given current regulations, as well as smallmouth bass and crappie (OMNR 2012b).

Ontario Parks encourages the inclusion of parks during broad scale monitoring programs of FMZ 5 as per Ontario's Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management. Additional monitoring activities for Lake of the Woods, beyond what is carried out during the monitoring of FMZ 5, may be considered, based on need and available funding.

9.3.10 Cultural Heritage Resources Management

Cultural heritage resources include archaeological resources, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.

The management of cultural heritage resources at Caliper Lake Provincial Park will be directed towards protection, heritage appreciation and research. Cultural heritage resources that may be impacted by any park projects or activities will be identified and managed (i.e. protected, maintained, and used) in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (*Ontario Heritage Act, 1990,* Part III.1). Staff will also consult MNRF's Technical Guideline for Cultural Heritage Resources.

In the event of a discovery of an archaeological site, Ontario Parks will work with appropriate ministries, relevant institutions or people to identify and assess the significance of the site.

Ontario Parks will consult with nearby Aboriginal communities on matters pertaining to Aboriginal history, any sites found within the park associated with Aboriginal culture, interpretation of Aboriginal history, and appropriate use of cultural artefacts. The precise location of any found Aboriginal cultural sites, including burial sites, will not be disclosed to the public.

The removal of artefacts or destruction of historical features is illegal and is prohibited by the PPCRA (O. Reg. 347/07 s.2 (1)).

9.3.11 Research

MNRF encourages scientific research by qualified individuals contributing to the knowledge of natural and cultural history and to environmental management. Ontario Parks will review proposed research to ensure adequate consideration of potential impacts on protected area resources, features, staff and visitors.

Research and monitoring activities require a research authorization letter issued under the Research Authorization for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Policy and must be consistent with Ontario Parks' research and information strategies (Ontario Parks 1997). Research will be subject to development and management policies associated

with the park's classification, unless special permission is given. Research must meet all requirements under applicable provincial and federal legislation, and may require additional permits or approval (e.g. MNRF Wildlife Scientific Collector authorization or ESA permits).

Sites altered by research activities or temporary research facilities must be rehabilitated as closely to their previous condition as possible, except where the specific intent of the research activities is disturbance for the purpose of ecological enhancement or restoration.

9.3.12 Inventory and Monitoring

A number of management actions are proposed within the management plan to assist in identifying inventory and monitoring needs, including: public input, routine park maintenance activities, staff knowledge and experiences, and environmental scans. In addition, monitoring may be conducted to support the assessment, design and implementation of new and existing developments, projects and activities or as part of monitoring required under the Class EA-PPCR.

Three Ontario Parks Inventory and Monitoring Plots (OPIAM) (McCaul et al. 2012) were established in 2005. These plots can be used to observe changes in vegetation communities and ecological integrity over time, as well as monitor breeding birds, other wildlife, and alien species. Additional monitoring plots will be encouraged.

9.4 Recreation Management Policies

Opportunities to enjoy high quality outdoor experiences available in Caliper Lake Provincial Park will be encouraged, provided they do not compromise the integrity of the park's natural features. Those activities that are incompatible with the park vision or objectives will be prohibited or restricted.

9.4.1 Hunting

Sport hunting is not permitted in Caliper Lake Provincial Park consistent with the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997* (FWCA).

9.4.2 Recreational Fishing

Recreational (sport) fishing is permitted in the waters of Caliper Lake.

Recreational fishing is one of the most commonly practiced activities in the park. The park supports this activity by providing two boat launches, docking facilities, and two fish cleaning stations.

Recreational fishing is subject to provincial (FWCA) and federal (*Fisheries Act*) fisheries legislation and regulations as set out in the Ontario Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary (MNRF annual publication).

9.4.3 Mechanized Travel

Motorized snow vehicles (e.g. snowmobiles) are not permitted in the park. Signs are erected at the day-use area and the northern boat launch prohibiting the use of motorized snow vehicles in the park.

Recreational all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use is not permitted in the park.

The park superintendent may authorize motorized use to carry out park management and maintenance activities where needed.

Consistent with federal boating regulations, motorized watercraft are not permitted in designated swimming areas. Docking facilities adjacent to the boat launch are available on a first-come first-served basis.

9.4.4 Trails

The park's single hiking trail, known as the Beaver Pond Trail, is accessible from the main road past the park office. The trail consists of a 2 km loop and a 3 km loop. Both loops begin and end in the park's mature red and white pine stand. Both loops wind their way through a Jack pine community and feature a viewing pod situated on a small but rich wetland area. The longer loop of the trail goes around the wetland area.

The majority of the trail (2.11 km), including the wetland area, is located outside the park boundary (Figure 3). The remainder of the trail is located within the park's nature reserve zone (NR-2) (Figure 4). The trail has not been identified as a value in the current forest management plan; therefore no area of concern prescription exists for it. There are no current allocations for harvesting in this area. The value has now been recognized in the Land Information Ontario system (LIO) and will be identified as a value in future forest management planning.

The trail currently experiences low levels of use. Visitor use will continue to be monitored. Updated interpretive signage and/or trail guide may be considered to enhance this facility.

Trails may be added as demand and funding permit in all zones.

9.4.5 Other Recreational Uses

Bicycling is permitted on the main park roads only (Section 10.1.1, Figure 3). Bicycles are not permitted on hiking trails or in nature reserve zones.

Camping is permitted on designated sites in the campground only (D -1 zone). No backcountry camping is permitted in the park.

Hiking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted on park trails/roads in all park zones. Mechanized grooming for the purposes of cross-country skiing does not currently occur.

Swimming, canoeing, kayaking, recreational fishing, sailing and sail boarding are only permitted in Caliper Lake.

Rock climbing is not permitted in the park.

Other recreational uses may be permitted based on park objectives, provincial policies and subject to the Class EA-PPCR, as applicable.

9.4.6 Services for Visitors

Food and beverage services, recreation equipment rental and sales, and retail sales will be determined through business planning in conjunction with the Northwest Zone and park operations plans.

9.5 Operations Policies

A park operations plan will be prepared to provide staff with the necessary direction required to operate the park on a day to day basis. In addition to addressing the operations policies, the plan will include such topics as budget, staffing, maintenance schedules, enforcement, and emergency services. The provisions of the plan will be consistent with the approved Ontario Provincial Parks Minimum Operating Standards, and will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

9.5.1 Natural Heritage Education (NHE)

The goal of the NHE program is to develop visitor awareness and appreciation of Ontario Parks' natural and cultural heritage to foster an appreciation of the parks' system.

At Caliper Lake Provincial Park there is no dedicated NHE staff. Information and interpretation in this park consists of signs or information kiosks, trail guides, self-guided trails or interpretive displays.

An NHE plan will be developed when or if required and as funds permit. The scope and intent of all activities will be carefully defined to ensure their compatibility with park features.

9.5.1.1 Information

Basic information regarding Caliper Lake Provincial Park, its resources, and facilities, as well as general information about the local area, camping, and the outdoors is distributed through a variety of means, including: the park office, the Ontario Parks guide, park tabloid, park maps and the Ontario Parks' website.

9.5.1.2 Park Interpretation

The park has one self-guided interpretive trail that focuses on the mature red and white pine forest. An updated trail guide or interpretive trail and additional interpretive signage about the provincial parks system may be considered as funding permits.

9.5.1.3 Outdoor Recreation Programs

NHE staff from nearby Rushing River Provincial Park may conduct outdoor recreation programs at Caliper Lake Provincial Park as demand warrants and availability permits.

9.6 Marketing and Communications Policies

Caliper Lake Provincial Park will be promoted in accordance with the Ontario Parks Marketing Plan.

Any promotional material developed by partner organizations must be reviewed and approved by Ontario Parks prior to distribution.

9.7 Development Policies

All development undertaken by Ontario Parks or by partners on its behalf will be subject to the Class EA-PPCR, and will be carried out in accordance with approved site and development plans that meet development standards for provincial parks.

The maintenance of ecological integrity is a guiding principle in park planning and management, and will be considered during any new development. Areas proposed for development will require prior assessment for significant cultural heritage features and natural values, such as SAR, to ensure these sites are suitable for development, and any values are identified and protected at the site.

The construction of new facilities or roads will be directed by approved implementation and site plans and will only be permitted in the development zone. No new facilities will be permitted in the Caliper Lake Zone (NE-1) (Figure 4).

9.7.1 Internal Roads, Parking Areas, Maintenance and Administrative Areas

Ontario Parks will continue to monitor the condition of park infrastructure (e.g. roads, buildings) as well as the performance and standards of the operations and maintenance facilities within the park. Maintenance and general improvements will occur to maintain visitor safety. Upgrading and/or replacement of facilities will occur as required or as funds permit.

The existing park office facility may require replacement in order to improve worker health and safety conditions, and to enhance customer service and park security. The

present facility lacks public washrooms, adequate parking, and backup or turn around lanes. A new office facility may also include road re-alignment and a new parking area.

The main park road floods regularly where it intersects the lowland area in the north part of the park. The current road bed may need to be raised and culverts added to rectify the seasonal flooding. Improvements of this nature will be completed as funding permits.

All upgrades and replacements will take into account park values (e.g. red and white pine stands).

9.7.2 Campground, Day-Use Areas and Trails

Ontario Parks will continue to monitor the quality of the day-use area and its facilities.

The campground at Caliper Lake Provincial Park was originally designed to accommodate tents and small trailers. Many of the campsites are not large enough to accommodate the increasing number and size of recreational vehicles (RVs). There has also been damage to the trees (e.g., bark scraped off, broken branches) due to collisions with RVs. Some sites in the park also require levelling in order to better accommodate trailers and RVs.

A small number of campsites may be combined in order to better accommodate larger vehicles and a small number of non-electrical sites may be considered for upgrade to electrical. This may also involve road re-alignment. Ontario Parks will continue to assess the viability and sustainability of the current campground and its facilities to ensure sites are in accordance with provincial standards.

Alternative roofed accommodations (e.g., cabins, yurts) or new campsites may be considered on the peninsula south of the eastern boat launch in the development zone on the site of a former cottage (D-1) (Section 10.1.1), as use warrants and resources become available. Alternative roofed accommodations may also be considered on existing campsites within the development zone (Section 10.1.1).

The existing water treatment plant will be replaced once planning for it is complete and as funding permits (Section 9.3.2).

Boat launch and docking facilities may be upgraded as funding permits and/or replaced as required. The relocation or expansion of existing facilities may be considered based on funding, need, and demand taking into account ecological integrity and park values.

Development of additional trails (e.g., including within nature reserve zones) may be considered based on need and demand for recreational opportunities or interpretive features. Changes to the existing trails may be considered if they are found to degrade or inhibit ecological values or processes from continuing in a healthy state. New trails or changes to existing trails will be designed to avoid or minimize impacts to natural and cultural values in the park.

10 ZONING AND ZONE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Lands within Caliper Lake Provincial Park are zoned in accordance with their natural and cultural values, recreational values and their need for protection and/or differing management requirements (Figure 4). Zones differentiate between the sensitivity of natural and cultural values, and the permissible degree of development, recreational uses, and management practices within the park.

The four zoning categories, development, access, nature reserve and natural environment, and associated permitted activities proposed for Caliper Lake Provincial Park are based on the Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies (OMNR 1992). Figure 4 shows the extent and boundaries of the proposed zoning designations for Caliper Lake Provincial Park.

10.1 Development Zone

Development zones contain the area(s) of the park that are geared towards the support of intensive day-use and camping activities.

10.1.1 D-1 – Park Road, Campground & Day-Use Area (29.5 ha)

The park's development zone (D-1) is intended to include all areas of existing development including the campground roads, parking areas and administrative/maintenance facilities.

Facilities include: a campground containing 83 sites (27 of which are electrically outfitted), a day-use area with playground and picnic shelter, two boat launches, docking facilities, two fish cleaning buildings, part of one hiking trail, one trailer dump and fill station, comfort station and septic field. Figure 3 shows existing development and facilities within the park.

The D-1 zone also includes the site that was previously occupied by a cottage. This site will remain undeveloped until a time where alternative roofed accommodations or additional campsites may be considered.

Park staff will monitor this zone for common symptoms of overuse such as exposed tree roots, soil compaction, and damage to trees.

10.2 Access Zone

Access zones serve as staging areas, a means of both providing and regulating use in areas of a park geared towards extensive recreation. Generally development is limited to roads, visitor control structures and group campgrounds.

10.2.1 A -1 - Park Road (4 ha)

This zone serves as the designated entry point to Caliper Lake Provincial Park from Highway 71, bisecting the park through the nature reserve and development zones. The

zone begins at the park entrance and ends as it crosses the park boundary in the southwest side of the park. The road is 2.05 km long. The access zone is 20 m wide (10 m either side of centreline). The access zone does not include the campground roads (Figure 4).

This zone allows for the use of cars, trucks, and bicycles on the existing roadway.

10.3 Natural Environment Zone

Natural environment zones include natural landscapes which permit the minimum level of development required to support low-intensity recreational activities.

10.3.1 NE -1 – Caliper Lake (44 ha)

The purpose of this zone is to provide protection for the park's shoreline features, including part of a wild rice stand, while providing opportunities for low-impact recreational activities on Caliper Lake.

This zone consists of the lands under water extending 152.4 m (500 feet), perpendicular to shore into Caliper Lake (Figure 4).

Development within this zone consists of two boat launch facilities and one docking facility.

10.4 Nature Reserve Zoning

Nature reserve zones protect the provincially significant earth and/or life science features within a park, and may include a protective area in which a minimum of development is permitted.

10.4.1 NR – 1 - Mature Red and White Pine (5 ha)

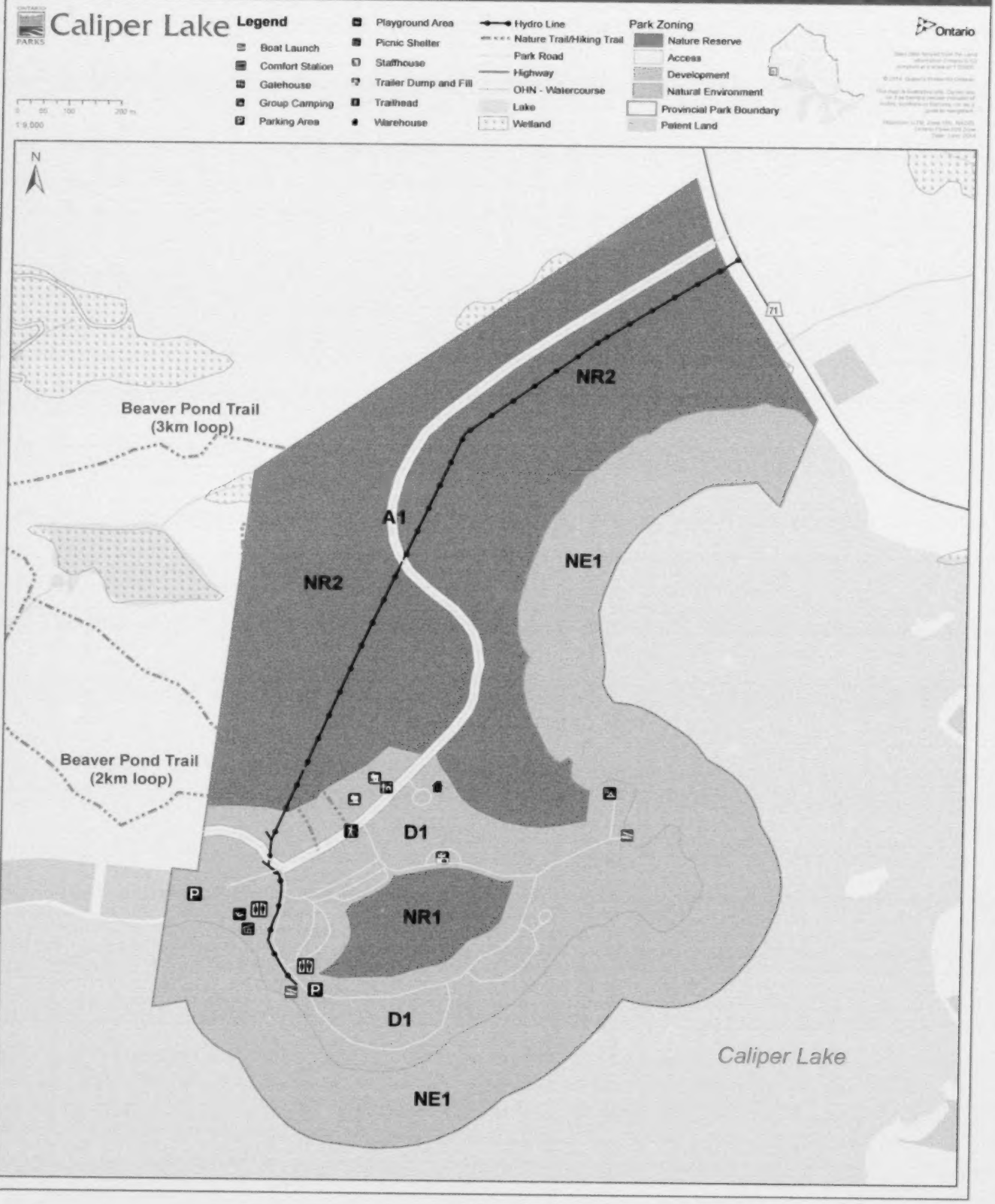
The park campground and day-use area are situated in the heart of a 150 year old red and white pine stand. The campground surrounds a large, undeveloped section of the stand. This area will be protected by nature reserve zone NR-1 (Figures 2 and 4).

10.4.1 NR – 2 - Mixed Forest (65 ha)

The remainder of the park is zoned as nature reserve NR-2. The nature reserve zone includes portions of five significant vegetation communities including: red pine - white pine uplands, jack pine mixed woods, ash-alder-willow wetlands, marsh wetlands and aspen dominated mixed woods (Goddard 1983) (Figures 2 and 4).

Figure 4

Park Zoning



The communities located on fine lacustrine/glaciolacustrine soils make a significant contribution to the representation requirements of the Kenora Ecodistrict.

Existing development within the NR-2 is the park nature trail and an electricity right-of-way.

11 IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Park development, operations and resource management will be contingent upon the availability of funding and unforeseeable changes in priorities or policy. Implementation of the management plan and operation of the park will meet the requirements of the EAA, EBR, PPCRA, ESA and other pertinent legislation.

All aspects of park management, development and operations will be subject to the Class EA-PPCR.

Park management, development and operations proposals will be phased in as funding is made available and/or as need requires:

- Annual review of the park operating plan,
- Ensure the hiking trail is identified as a value in forest management planning, and monitor its use,
- Replace park office and realign roads as necessary, while developing adequate associated parking facilities,
- Vegetation maintenance and/or restoration efforts in areas of the park highly disturbed to maintain/achieve ecological processes and goals,
- Minor development upgrades / replacement as needed to maintain day-use facilities including updates to trail signage and/or interpretive guides;
- Remove decommissioned shower building from day-use area,
- Mitigate vegetation damage in campgrounds and alleviate pressures to ensure damage is kept to a minimum, and other campground improvements as necessary,
- Preparation of a NHE plan.

12 EXAMINATION AND ADJUSTMENT OF MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

This plan will be examined after it has been in place for 20 years to determine whether it is still relevant, effective and current or if adjustments are needed. In circumstances where the plan is not providing sufficient direction, or to address specific issues or pressures, it can be examined prior to the next scheduled examination.

External requests for amendments to address specific proposals or needs may be considered. Ontario Parks can provide further guidance on the process for requesting an amendment and whether specific requests can/will be considered.

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SPECIES LIST

Species by common name as mentioned within the document text. Please note: This list is not an exhaustive species list for the park.

13.1 PLANT

13.1.1 Tree

Ash (*Fraxinus spp.*)
Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*)
Large-toothed aspen (*Populus grandidentata*)
Red pine (*Pinus resinosa*)
White pine (*Pinus strobus*)

13.1.2 Shrub & Forb

Alder spp. (*Alnus spp.*)
Currant & Gooseberry (*Ribes spp.*)
Oxeye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*)
Stinging nettle (*urtica dioica*)
Three-toothed cinquefoil (*Sibbaldiopsis tridentate*)
White sweet clover (*Melilotus albus*)

13.2 ANIMAL

13.2.1 Bird

American White pelicans (Pelecanus erythrorhynchos)
Bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)

13.2.2 Fish

Black crappie (Pomoxis nigromaculatus)
Northern pike (Esox lucius)
Smallmouth bass (Micropterus dolomieui)
Walleye (*Sander vitreus vitreus*)
Yellow perch (Perca flavescens)

13.2.3 Mammal

Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus)*
Deer (Odocoileus virginianus)
Elk (*Cervus canadensis*)
Moose (*Alces alces)*

13.2.4 Insect

Forest tent caterpillars (*Malacosoma disstria)*
Jack pine budworm *(Choristoneura pinus)*

13.3 BACTERIA

Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*)

13.4 FUNGI

White Pine Blister Rust *(Cronartium ribicola)*

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